

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 and 19-24 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 8, 15, 16, 19 and 20 are amended, and claims 17 and 18 are canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein. The amendments to claims 1, 8, 15 and 16 are supported in the specification at, for example, page 19, line 16-page 20, line 4, and page 25, lines 1-10. No new matter is added. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 17 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. §101. Claims 17 and 18 are canceled by this Amendment. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claim 19 under 35 U.S.C. §101. Claim 19 is amended to obviate the rejection. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim 20 is amended similarly to claim 19.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-3, 8-10 and 13-20 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 6,623,358 to Harima. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, if it is judged to start the motion of the first object, displaying a plurality of effect objects, the plurality of effect objects provided three-dimensionally at the side that the first object is going to move from a location of the first object immediately before the first object starts moving, and making the plurality of effect objects sequentially disappear in proximate order from the location of the first object at a time in which it is judged to start the motion of the first object immediately after the first object starts moving.

The Office Action asserts that Harima teaches these features because Harima discloses that hit effects are displayed every time an attack lands or makes contact with the other character (col. 2, line 10) and that the transparency of the effects is changed based on time (the number of frames) (col. 10, lines 47-52). Applicants disagree with this assertion.

Harima discloses at col. 10, lines 7-15 that a hit decision section decides whether one of the characters hits an attack on one another of the characters, and a hit effect generation section changes the hit effect data memorized in the memorizing section according to the attack decided by the hit decision section, to generate the hit effect in the object space according to the effect data changed thereby. Therefore, as asserted by the Office Action, Harima generates a hit effect every time an attack lands or makes contact with the other character. However, Harima does not display a plurality of effect objects if it is judged to start the motion of the attacking or attacked character. In other words, Harima may generate a plurality of hit effects if multiple attacks land or make contact with a character, but each landed or contacted attack does not cause a plurality of hit effects to be generated.

Further, even if a plurality of hit effects are generated by multiple attacks, Harima calculates a direction of a hit effect based on the direction of each attack. Therefore, in Harima, all of the hit effects displayed are not generated three-dimensionally at the side that the first object is going to move from a location of the first object, as recited in claim 1. That is, in Harima, the direction of the second hit effect, for example, is based on a direction of the second attack, which could be different from the direction of the first attack.

Moreover, Harima does not teach or suggest the timing for displaying the effect objects or making the effect objects disappear as discussed below.

Regarding the display timing, Harima discloses at col. 8, lines 59-65 that just after the hit decision unit 212 decides that the attack character hits the attack on the opponent character, the hit effect control unit 214 controls or operates the particles during the predetermined number of frames according to the effect control data 514. However, Harima does not specifically teach or suggest that the effect object is provided immediately before the first object starts moving.

Regarding the disappearing timing, Harima discloses at col. 10, lines 47-54 that the light source control unit 216 decides a light emitting time (the number of frames) of a hit effect according to the disappearing speed of the hit effect, that is, the speed of changing the transparency in the effect control data 514, and that the light source control unit 216 gradually reduces the strength of the light source, that is, gradually returns to the state before the hit, according to the lapse of the light emission time. In addition, Harima discloses at col. 7, lines 3-7 that the hit effect is generated so as to have the color, the form, the size, the disappearing speed and so on, changed according to the attack strength, the attack character, the attack technique such as a kick, a punch or a special technique, or the like. Therefore, in Harima, each hit effect may have different disappearing speed depending on the type of the corresponding attack. Therefore, the disappearance of hit effects cannot be sequential because the disappearing speed of each hit effect is independent from the disappearing speed of its previous hit effect. Therefore, Harima does not specifically teach or suggest making the plurality of effect objects sequentially disappear, as recited in claim 1. Furthermore, because the disappearing speed of each hit effect is independent from that of the other hit effects, Harima does not specifically teach or suggest making the plurality of effect objects disappear in proximate order from the location of the first object at a time in which it is judged to start the motion of the first object immediately after the first object starts moving, as recited in claim 1.

At least for these reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is patentable over Harima.

Independent claim 8 recites making an effect object sequentially disappear from a side proximate to the location of the first object at a time in which it is judged to start the motion of the first object immediately after the first object starts moving.

As discussed above, Harima discloses that each hit effect as its disappearing speed based on a type of an attack. However, Harima does not teach or suggest that a portion of a hit effect disappears earlier or faster than another portion of the hit effect. Therefore, Harima does not teach or suggest making the effect object sequentially disappear from a side proximate to the location of the first object at a time in which it is judged to start the motion of the first object immediately after the first object starts moving, as recited in claim 8. Therefore, claim 8 is patentable over Harima.

Independent claim 15 recites a displaying section for, if it is judged to start the motion of the first object, displaying a plurality of effect objects, the plurality of effect objects being provided three-dimensionally at the side that the first object is going to move from a location of the first object immediately before the first object starts moving, and a nondisplay section for making the plurality of effect objects sequentially disappear in proximate order from the location of the first object at a time in which it is judged to start the motion of the first object immediately after the first object starts moving. Similar to claim 1, Harima does not teach or suggest these features. Thus, claim 15 is patentable over Harima.

Independent claim 16 recites a nondisplay section for making an effect object sequentially disappear from a side proximate to the location of the first object at a time in which it is judged to start the motion of the first object immediately after the first object starts moving. Similar to claim 8, Harima does not teach or suggest this feature. Thus, claim 16 is patentable over Harima.

Dependent claims 2, 3, 9, 10, 13, 14, 19 and 20 are allowable at least for their dependence on their allowable base claims, as well as for the additional features they recite. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 4-6 and 11 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Harima in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,211,882 to Pearce. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Pearce is relied upon as teaching simulating the motion blur of a polygon, and does not overcome the deficiency of Harima with respect to claims 1 and 8. Therefore, claims 4-6 and 11 are allowable at least for their dependence on claims 1 and 8, respectively, as well as for additional features they recite. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 21-24 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Harima in view of one having ordinary skill in the art. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Office Action asserts "In the art of fighting games, a 'finishing move' is a character based on move used to end a match with style and skill since the button sequence for the move is usually difficult. Therefore, Harima would display a 'finishing move' with the intensity that is associated with it by showing the effect at some point appear behind the attacked model to demonstrate the final move ending the 'life' of the opponent model by ripping a hole into their body." However, Harima does not specifically disclose or suggest such a finishing move or demonstrating "the final move ending the 'life' of the opponent model by ripping a hole into their body" (emphasis added). Therefore, this assertion by the Office Action is merely based on a speculation and without any basis. Thus, this rejection is improper. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the application are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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